

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2016

The regular meeting for the Board of Selectmen convened at 7:00 p.m. in the public meeting room in the Town Office Building at 110 Main Street. In attendance were Dr. Richard M. Smith, John R. Morrell, and Edward S. Harrison. Also present were Town Administrator Evan Brassard and the media.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Harrison made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of May 10, 2016 – open session. Mr. Morrell seconded and it was unanimously VOTED.

Pole Petition #21368662 – Bogan Road – Public Hearing:

The public hearing was opened at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. Harrison read Pole Petition #21368662 into the record. It was noted both the Highway and Water/Sewer Departments had no issues with the pole location. There wasn't anyone in the audience to speak for or against the petition.

Mr. Harrison made a motion to approve Pole Petition #21368662 as presented. Mr. Morrell seconded and it was unanimously VOTED.

The public hearing was closed at 7:10 p.m.

Volunteer Discussion:

Monson Parks and Recreation Commissioner Mark Bodak approached the Board of Selectmen on behalf of himself. Mr. Bodak inquired how to go about getting volunteers to help with the fields, and wondered if a system was in place for this as they need help with lining and mowing the fields, etc.

Mr. Bodak said they run into hour shortages, with Steve Gordon and Tim Pascale doing as much as they can and having lost some of the help they had last year. Mr. Bodak said they have had people volunteer to line the fields and cut the grass, if necessary, for baseball, softball, lacrosse, soccer, etc. They understand training would have to be certified, a liability waiver would have to be signed, and Parks and Rec. would have to authorize any type of maintenance on the field prior to it happening.

Dr. Smith said he's sure there is a liability consideration with volunteers doing this type of work.

Mr. Brassard said the town has a policy in place for boards and commissions as far as them being covered under the liability umbrella. The part that gets sticky with using volunteers is with running the

towns' power equipment as they aren't town employees, so if someone gets injured, they have no worker's compensation coverage, plus there isn't any screening for volunteers or background checks. Mr. Brassard also noted there is an issue as well if the volunteer is doing the work of a union employee, which opens the town up to a grievance procedure.

Mr. Brassard explained contractors are a different story as they have their own liability insurance, as long as they are doing the work as gratis to the town, volunteering their time as the corporate business entity and not as a person per say. The only issue remaining is if this is a function performed by a union employee, and if so it would have to be bargained.

Mr. Bodak said the fields will be used for town club sports and not Parks and Rec. sports. The clubs are willing to rent the fields, however the Parks and Rec. Department doesn't have the time to line these fields or to maintain them so they couldn't provide this option, and in doing so had to forfeit money it could have generated.

Mr. Bodak said Parks and Rec. are doing a good job with the seasons currently in play such as baseball, softball, lacrosse, etc. it's the option to have additional fields that could be open, that weren't able to be maintained because of priorities to other fields.

Dr. Smith said this money may offset the hours increased to do this work, and if they could show in the budget process, the potential revenue that having the additional fields open will generate, it might help.

Mr. Brassard said the problem Parks and Rec. is going to face is the State has seen fit to deny all our applications for seasonal employment as they are not functionally distinct. Mr. Brassard said if someone in the town can cut grass or line a field, you can't have seasonal help cut the grass or line the field, and said we will have to come up with a work-a-round after this year.

Mr. Brassard said he feels it's a solvable problem and if they want to just do the field for club use only and bring in a contractor who is willing to do it gratis, to come in thirty days in advance to let him know when the events are scheduled for and he will bring it to the union to bargain it.

Mr. Morrell said an option would be to hire another person to share between the Parks and Rec. and Cemetery Departments.

Mr. Bodak questioned if the town has union members or could they use volunteers to operate the curtains and lights in Memorial Hall with Summer Theatre that goes through Parks and Rec., and with Bulky Day. Mr. Brassard responded that is totally its own entity. When asked where that line is drawn, Mr. Brassard responded we don't have any union members who work that and as far as volunteers and waivers he would have to ponder it, and explained Bulky Day is handled mostly by town employees and Board members and Republic Services employees, which has a contract with the town for trash removal.

Mr. Brassard told Mr. Bodak he is willing to attend a Park and Recreation Commissioner's meeting to answer any questions regarding the budget, etc. pertaining to this issue.

Hillside School Abatement Report:

Mr. Brassard said \$4,800 was approved by the Finance Committee to do an abatement study of Hillside to determine the next steps regarding the property.

Mr. Brassard felt it prudent to look at the abatement first, as the abatement ties into demolition as well as refurbishing the property. The town contracted with Bay State Contracting Services, who went in and took numerous samples looking for hazmat materials and asbestos, of which quite a bit was found in everything from the calking on the windows to the glue under the tiles, the glue that holds the carpet to the tiles also has asbestos in it, as do the tiles it's stuck to.

Mr. Brassard said the initial sum for abatement, not demolition, just to removing that material is \$400,000. Mr. Brassard also has a quote of \$250,000 to \$300,000 to demo the building on top of that for a total of \$700,000. Remodeling the building would cost the \$400,000 material removal cost plus the remodel costs. At \$100 per square foot for remodeling, which Mr. Brassard said is a conservative estimate, you are at \$2.4 million, and with the \$400,000 added to that, it would be a total of \$2.8 million to make it a viable building; possibly \$1.2 million to do it on the cheap side and got the remodeling done for \$50 per square foot, which Mr. Brassard said is unlikely but not unheard of, plus the \$400,000 and you are still at \$1.6 million.

Mr. Brassard said in going forward, the conversation should be, what we see for a potential use. He noted some folks want to see a community center, some demolition, and some want to see a private sale; however Mr. Brassard added he didn't feel anyone would want to purchase a building that they would have to spend \$400,000 on cleaning it up first.

Mr. Brassard said this property sits at a pretty important junction for the town, and whether that becomes another park or another building or open space, until another solution is found he didn't know if the money received from that is going to offset.

Dr. Smith said we could spend \$400,000 and recoup money.

Mr. Brassard noted spending the \$400,000 leaves a hollow building. It doesn't remove the brick or anything else; it's just for the hazardous materials.

Dr. Smith said if we spend the \$700,000 and demo the building, we could recoup some of that rather than just having a field vs. spending \$1.2 million to renovate the building.

Mr. Brassard said he felt it would require some public input as to what the demand is and what the taxpayers would like to see.

Mr. Harrison said you don't want to just leave the building there for ten years like South Main Street School was, as it would just deteriorate.

Mr. Brassard said we have to figure out how the town wants to proceed, how the town would fund such a project, and what the disposition of that property would be at the end.

Mr. Brassard noted the School hasn't officially turned the building over to the Town yet, because the oil tank is still there.

Mr. Harrison felt we should probably have a public hearing and lay out what the options are and the expenses associated with it and receive the input.

Mr. Brassard noted he has been looking into grant opportunities, but there isn't anything out there for this type of work. Mr. Brassard agreed the next step should be a public hearing to hear what people have to say and what direction we should travel in.

Mr. Morrell said he felt the hearing should be about whether to keep the building up or knock it down, and not necessarily what the future use will be.

It was agreed to have Mr. Brassard schedule a public hearing in the beginning of July in Memorial Hall.

Water/Sewer Superintendent Craig Jalbert was in the audience and suggested putting a survey on the website for input. The Board agreed that is a good idea and Mr. Brassard noted he would do that and that he could actually make it go live immediately after the public hearing with all the information that was presented at the hearing.

Mr. Brassard thanked Town Planner Dan Laroche for his work on getting the report, and Paul DeMaio for all the work beyond that as far as coordinating and getting all the people in and out, and giving some oversight in the process.

Memorial Hall Update:

Mr. Brassard gave a brief update noting we have a pretty full summer down planned for Memorial Hall already. We have a live calendar that's searchable if you go to Google and type in Memorial Hall calendar. Paul has put up the main curtain and we just received our six leg curtains that cover the wings of the stage, and they should be up by the end of the week. All the trim in the building has been painted, all of the wains coating, and now the doors are being painted. Mr. Brassard said the main Memorial Hall door project is complete. The new boiler has been funded for \$50,000 through CPC and this project will start on or immediately after July 1st. Summer Theatre will be working in there, the fiber art show will be held there, and we are looking to do a Town forum on addiction in the fall in September. Mr. Brassard said he is working with the Department Heads on possibly doing a quarterly Town forum on human services items.

Mr. Brassard said the Town is in the process of redoing our website, and the new website will have a page for Memorial Hall with its own calendar on it.

Dr. Smith said it's good to see Memorial Hall being used after all the time and money spent renovating it.

Medical Marijuana Facility Update:

Mr. Brassard said he had two meetings with the owners of Holistic Industries and their representatives. The first meeting with them was at the facility they purchased in Monson with the Town Planner and Police Chief Stephen Kozloski. Mr. Brassard noted he wanted Chief Kozloski to be comfortable with whatever the firm is proposing regarding security, and to be fully engaged as they go through the security process.

Mr. Brassard said the second meeting was with the actual person who will run the facility. This project is moving forward and is in the final phase of licensure. The building has been purchased and they are starting the renovation process.

Mr. Brassard noted they are still talking about creating fifty local jobs, and they are looking for local contractors to work on the renovations.

In Other Business to Come Before the Board:

- Dr. Smith said a request was received from Police Chief Stephen Kozloski to appoint Angelia M. Rodrigues as an Auxiliary Police Officer.

Mr. Harrison made a motion to appoint Angelia M. Rodrigues as a n Auxiliary Police Officer effective immediately through June 30, 2016. Mr. Morrell seconded and it was unanimously VOTED.

- Mr. Morrell said last Saturday he and Water/Sewer Superintendent Craig Jalbert attended the Eagle Scout ceremony for the gentlemen who did the salt shed for the Highway Department and the hydrants for the Water/Sewer Department. Mr. Morrell said it was quite an experience, very impressive, and very well attended. It made him realize the importance of becoming an Eagle Scout and how hard it is to achieve that rank.
- Mr. Morrell said on June 15th there is an MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) meeting, and explained the MPO decides what projects are going to be done in this region. There are fourteen towns in our region which has only one vote. Four towns have submitted Selectmen for nomination: one from each Belchertown, Longmeadow, Ludlow, and Ware who are interested in being our one vote. Mr. Morrell said he plans to attend this meeting to hopefully get somebody who will be behind us on our projects in the future.

Correspondence was read and completed.

At 8:00 p.m., Mr. Harrison made a motion to adjourn from open session to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to non-union personnel pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, Section 21 (2) and collective bargaining or litigation pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, Section 21 (3), not to return to open session. Mr. Morrell seconded and it was unanimously VOTED.

Edward S. Harrison, Clerk